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lower than that which Mr. Scoresby assigns to the north of Spitzbergen, might well surprise me until I had seen it perfectly established by observations on the temperature of the air which were made during several consecutive years, and with thermometers compared with my own.

"I enclose the observations taken three times a day for the year 1827, whence it results that the mean temperature of the atmosphere at Yakutsk is  $-5^{\circ}.9$  Réaumur, which agrees very well with the temperature which I had found near the surface of the ground.

"I may remark that I have selected a *temperate winter*, for in 1828 the cold in the month of January was much more severe, as the mean of the observation then gave

	At 6 A. M.	2 P. M.	9 P. M.
January, 1838	$-38^{\circ}.3$	$-35^{\circ}.7$	$-37^{\circ}$

and the mercury did not thaw for *three months together*: in ordinary years it is only solid for two months.

"Now the mean temperature of Yakutsk being  $-6^{\circ}$ , it follows necessarily that if we dig deeper into the earth we must not expect to find the ground thawed till the increment of heat due to the approach towards the centre should amount to  $6^{\circ}$  of Réaumur.

"The *data* which we hitherto possessed on the increase of the internal heat of the globe, and which have been collected together by Mr. Delabeche in his excellent treatise on Geognosy, indicated from 90 to 100 French feet for an increase of  $1^{\circ}$  of Réaumur; I did not therefore expect to find the ground thawed at Yakutsk until at a depth of from 500 to 600 French feet (see p. 251 of vol. ii.), and if the actual fact of a thaw at the depth of 400 feet has surprised me, it is only because it has occurred *too soon*; and that it thereby indicates for the strata that compose the ground at Yakutsk a greater faculty for conducting heat than is possessed by the strata hitherto examined in Europe."

## XVII.—*An Account of the Recent Arctic Discoveries by Messrs.*

DEASE and T. SIMPSON. Communicated by J. H. PELLY, Esq., Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.

[Just half a century has elapsed since Alexander Mackenzie, in 1789, first descended the great river which so justly bears his name, and reached the waters of the Polar Sea. Thirty-seven years later, in 1826, Franklin and Back followed Mackenzie's course to the mouth of the same river, and coasted 370 miles to the westward, tracing the northern shore of America till within 160 miles of Point Barrow, which was reached from the westward by Mr. Elson, Master of H.M.S. Blossom, only four days after Franklin was obliged to return. The intermediate portion has remained a blank on our maps till the last few days have brought us the gratifying intelligence of an expedition headed by Messrs. Dease and Simpson, two enterprising officers in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, having successfully traced the unexplored country between Point Barrow and Franklin's farthest; and thus a continuous line of 60 degrees in extent, of the northern coast of America, from Point



Turnagain on the east to Behring's Strait on the west, has been explored by British hardihood and perseverance. The only account of it yet received is contained in the simple narrative of the gentlemen who conducted this expedition, which was with much kindness immediately communicated to the Geographical Society by the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.]

Fort Norman, 5th September, 1837.

HONOURABLE SIRS,—We have now the honour to report the complete success of the expedition this summer to the westward of Mackenzie's River.

Our arrangements up to the departure of the expedition from Fort Chipewyan were stated in full to Governor Simpson and the Northern Council, who, no doubt, communicated them to your Honours; we shall, therefore, present a brief detail of our subsequent operations.

On the 1st June we quitted Fort Chipewyan, with two small sea-boats, accompanied by a luggage-boat and a party of hunters, for Great Bear Lake; visited the salt plains, and arrived at Great Slave Lake on the 10th, where we were detained by ice until the 21st. The same cause prolonged our passage across that inland sea, and, having been for two days stopped by a strong contrary wind at the head of Mackenzie's River, it was the 1st July when we reached Fort Norman. Our Indians cast up on the following day, and the crews and cargoes were finally divided and arranged. Our boat-builder, John Ritch, received his instructions to proceed immediately, with a fisherman, two other labourers, and the hunters, to Great Bear Lake, and at its north-eastern extremity to erect our winter-quarters, and lay in a stock of provisions against our return from the coast. We then took our departure, and on the 4th reached Fort Good Hope. There we found an assemblage of Hare Indians and Loucheux. The latter informed us that three of their tribe had been killed and a fourth severely wounded by the Esquimaux in the preceding month, which at once put an end to our intention of procuring an interpreter from among them, although several volunteered to accompany us in that capacity. They at the same time earnestly cautioned us to beware of the treacherous arts of their enemies. On the 9th July we reached the ocean by the most westerly mouth of the Mackenzie, which Sir John Franklin sought for in vain. It is situated in lat.  $68^{\circ} 49\frac{1}{2}'$  N., long.  $136^{\circ} 37'$  W., and perfectly answers the description which the Esquimaux messengers gave of it to that officer when they came to apprise him of the intended attack by the Mountain Indians.

We had proceeded but a short distance to seaward, when a party of nineteen men came off to us from Tent Island. We gave each of them a small present, a practice which we continued

throughout the voyage, and employed our vocabularies to the best of our ability, and to their great surprise, to explain the friendly feeling of the whites towards their tribe. Being a lively and communicative people, we in the course of the season acquired some facility in our intercourse with them, and when words failed, signs supplied their place, so that we seldom experienced much difficulty in making ourselves understood, or in comprehending their meaning. When indulged, however, they always became daring and excessively troublesome, and they were ever on the look-out for plunder. On this first meeting they made several unsuccessful attempts in that way, and it was no easy matter to induce them to return to their camp, after we had finished our business with them. They said they wished to accompany us to our encampment, where they would have soon been joined by fresh parties, and we had a shoal and dangerous navigation before us that night. We therefore peremptorily ordered them back; but it was not until we fired a ball over their heads that they put about and paddled off. A storm soon after arose, but we made the land in safety the following morning at Shingle Point, in lat. 69°, where we were detained until the 11th. The thermometer had already fallen to 48° (Fahr.), being 30° lower than on the evening we left the Mackenzie River, and, instead of the bright and beautiful weather we enjoyed in our descent of that noble stream, we were now doomed to travel in cold dense fogs, which enveloped us during nearly the whole of our progress along the coast. But although they perplexed and retarded us, we never allowed them to arrest our course, nor did we ever throughout the voyage encamp but when compelled to do so by ice or contrary winds, to which line of conduct may, under Providence, be ascribed the early and successful accomplishment of our undertaking. In the afternoon of the 11th July we reached Point Key, where we were detained by a compact body of ice occupying Phillip's Bay until the 14th. There we were visited by another party of Esquimaux, whose tents were pitched at no great distance from us. They live in the country bordering on Babbage River, and informed us that, except when flooded by the melting of the mountain snows, it is an insignificant stream, not fifty yards in breadth: of this we had ocular proof in a clear day on our return. A handsome flora was collected in this neighbourhood. Having found a passage through the ice in Phillip's Bay, we reached Herschel Island the same evening (14th July), and had intercourse with other parties of the natives, who were pretty numerous along this part of the coast. We found on the island the skull of a whale eight feet in breadth; and whalebone is everywhere an article in extensive use among the natives, especially for the making of their nets and the fastenings of their sledges. We continued our route before

an easterly wind, along and through the ice, with very little interruption till two A.M. of the 17th, when an unbroken pack, extending to seaward, made us seek the shore in Camden Bay, near a considerable camp of Esquimaux. As soon as the fears of the latter were removed, an amicable meeting took place, and, having made them the usual presents, we purchased a good many of their mouth ornaments, weapons, and other articles, which will be forwarded in due course to the Hudson Bay House. Three of the men were remarkable for their good looks, upright figures, and a stature of from five feet ten to six feet. They gave us a specimen of their dances, and one of them afterwards won the palm from all our people at leaping. They informed us that they have two sources of trade; the first and most regular with their countrymen, who come annually from the westward; the other with the Mountain Indians, who use fire-arms, and travel a great way across land from the direction of the Russian settlements. They showed us the knives, iron kettles, beads, and other things thus procured, which we have no doubt are of Russian manufacture. Their means of repayment appeared to us very limited, consisting in seal-skins, whalebone, ivory, and a few inferior furs, viz., wolvereens, foxes, and musk-rats. A pair of indifferent beaver gloves was purchased from them, which they had probably procured from the Mountain Indians, for we saw no other symptom of the existence of that valuable animal near the coast, though it doubtless abounds at some distance up the large wooded rivers which we subsequently discovered. In the afternoon there appeared a narrow lane of water stretching outwards, and we immediately embarked. We had advanced about three miles from the land, when the ice suddenly closed upon us, before a strong north-east wind; one of the boats got squeezed, and it was only by throwing out the cargo upon the floating masses that she was saved from destruction. By means of portages made from one piece to another—the oars serving as bridges—the cargo was all recovered, and both boats finally hauled up on a large floe, where we passed an inclement and anxious night. Next morning the gale abated, the ice relaxed a little around us, and by a long circuit we regained the shore, about a league to the eastward of our former position. There we were detained till midnight of the 19th, when a favourable wind enabled us to round the body of ice at a distance of four miles from the land, and, continuing, carried us on the 20th into Foggy Island Bay. There we were stopped by the ice and a violent north-east wind until the 23rd, having on the preceding day made an ineffectual attempt to weather Point Anxiety, in which we narrowly escaped with a thorough drenching. The latitude ashore was  $70^{\circ} 10'$ . From this situation we had the satisfaction of discovering, during a clear afternoon, a range of

the rocky mountains to the westward of the Romanzoff chain, and not seen by Sir John Franklin, but, being within the limit of his survey, we called it the "Franklin Range," as a just tribute to his character and merits. On the 23rd we again set sail, rounded the pack of ice, which extended six miles to seaward from Yarlborough Inlet, then, abruptly turning in, we supped near Return Reef, and the survey commenced.

Return Reef is one of a chain of reefs and islets which runs for twenty miles parallel to the coast, at the distance of about half a league, affording water enough within for such light craft as ours. The mainland is very low. From "Point Berens" to "Cape Halkett" (named after two members of your Honourable Board) it forms a great bay, fifty miles broad by a third of that depth, which in honour of the Deputy-Governor was named "Harrison's Bay." At the bottom of this bay another picturesque branch of the Rocky Mountain range—the last seen by us—rears its lofty peaks above these flat shores: we called them "Pelly's Mountains," in honour of the Governor of the Company. At their base flows a large river, two miles broad at its mouth, which we named after Andrew Colville, Esq. This river freshens the water for many miles, and its alluvial deposits have rendered Harrison's Bay so shallow, that it was not till after a run of twenty-five hours, during which we had repeatedly to stand well out to seaward, that we could effect a landing on a grounded iceberg, nine miles to the south-west of Cape Halkett. A north-east gale kept us there the whole of the following day. The country extending to the foot of the mountains appeared to consist of plains covered with short grass and moss, the favourite pasture of the reindeer, of which we saw numerous herds. Observations were obtained, determining our position to be in lat.  $70^{\circ} 43' N.$ , long.  $152^{\circ} 14' W.$ ; variation of the compass  $43^{\circ} E.$  Next morning (26th July) the tide rose nearly two feet at six A.M., and enabled us safely to cross the shoals. At no great distance from our encampment we passed the mouth of another large river, one mile broad, whose banks were thickly lined with drift timber. We named it the "Garry," in honour of Nicholas Garry, Esq. Cape Halkett forms the extreme point of a small island, separated from the main shores by a narrow channel too shallow for boats. Its situation was likewise found by observation to be in lat.  $70^{\circ} 48' N.$ , long.  $151^{\circ} 55' W.$  It appears to be a place of resort to the Esquimaux, for we found a spot where they had been building their baidars last spring. We suppose them to have been part of a very large camp, which we saw in the bay of Staines River, as we sailed past the east end of Flaxman Island on the 20th July; that this camp consisted of the western traders of that tribe on their annual journey to meet their eastern

brethren at Barter Island; and that we missed them on our return, from the circumstance of their being then dispersed along the rivers, lakes, and in the skirts of the mountains, hunting the reindeer.

From thence the coast turned suddenly off to the W.N.W. It presented nothing to the eye but a succession of low banks of frozen mud. The ice was heavy all along, but there were narrow channels close to the shore; the soundings on these averaged one fathom on sandy bottom. In the evening we passed the mouth of a considerable river, which was named after William Smith, Esq. From thence, for about six miles, the coast-line is formed of gravel reefs, near the extremity of which, at "Point Pitt," (called after another member of your Honourable Board,) the land trends more to the westward. The ice lay much closer here; numerous masses adhered to the bottom under the water, which obliged us to search for a passage out from the shore. The night was dark and stormy, and we were in considerable danger; one of the rudders gave way, but we at length effected a landing on a place near an immense reindeer pound. This was ingeniously formed by the Esquimaux with double rows of turf, set up on a ridge of ground enclosing a hollow four miles by two, the end farthest from the beach terminating in a lake, into which the unsuspecting animals are driven and there despatched with spears. The vegetable soil in this vicinity was barely four inches in depth, beneath which the clay was frozen as hard as rock, so that our tent pickets could not be driven home. The men had to go a good mile to find a log or two of drift-wood for fuel, the scarcity of which essential article is doubtless the chief cause of the want of inhabitants along so great a portion of the coast. We were detained at this place till the following afternoon (27th), when the ice opening a little enabled us to resume our route. It blew a cutting blast from the north-east, and the salt water froze upon the oars and rigging. "Point Drew," called after Richard Drew, Esq., seven miles distant from our last encampment, is the commencement of a bay of considerable size, but extremely shallow, and much encumbered with ice, in pushing through which the boats received several blows; and we had on this, as on many other occasions, to admire their excellent workmanship. To seaward the ice was still smooth and solid as in the depth of a sunless winter. At midnight we reached a narrow projecting point, across which the peaks of some high icebergs appeared, and were from a distance mistaken for lodges of the natives. This point we named "Cape George Simpson," as a mark of respect for our worthy governor. It was destined to be the limit of our boat navigation, for during the four following days we were only able to advance as many miles. The weather was foggy and dismally



cold, the wild fowl passed in long flights to the westward, and there seemed little prospect of our being able to reach Point Barrow by water. "Boat Extreme" is situated in lat.  $71^{\circ} 3' N.$ , long.  $154^{\circ} 26' W.$ ; variation of the compass,  $42^{\circ} E.$

Under the above circumstances Mr. Thomas Simpson undertook to complete the journey on foot, and accordingly started on the 1st of August with a party of five men. They carried with them their arms, some ammunition, pemmican, a small oiled canvas canoe for the crossing of rivers, the necessary astronomical instruments, and a few trinkets for the natives. It was one of the worst days of the whole season, and the fog was so dense that the pedestrians were under the necessity of rigidly following the tortuous outline of the coast, which for twenty miles formed a sort of irregular inland bay, (being guarded without by a series of gravel reefs,) the shore of which was almost on a level with the water, and intersected by innumerable salt creeks, through which they waded, besides three considerable rivers or inlets, which they traversed in their portable canoe. They found at one place a great many large wooden sledges, joined with whalebone and strongly shod with horn. Mr. Simpson conjectures that these vehicles were left there by the western Esquimaux, already spoken of, on their eastward journey, to be resumed again on their return when winter sets in. The tracks of reindeer were everywhere numerous. Next day the weather improved, and at noon the latitude  $71^{\circ} 10'$  was observed. The land now inclined to the south-west, and continued very low, muddy, and, as on the preceding day, abounding in salt creeks whose waters were at the freezing temperature. The party had proceeded about ten miles when to their dismay the coast suddenly turned off to the southward, forming an inlet extending as far as the eye could reach; at the same moment they descried, at no great distance, a small camp of the western Esquimaux, to which they immediately directed their steps. The men were absent hunting, and the women and children took to their boats in the greatest alarm, leaving behind them an infirm man, who was in an agony of fear. A few words of friendship removed his apprehensions and brought back the fugitives, who were equally surprised and delighted to behold white men. They set before the party fresh reindeer meat and seal-oil, and besought them for tobacco (tawâccah), of which men, women, and even children are inordinately fond. Mr. Simpson now determined to adopt a more expeditious mode of travelling, and applied for the loan of one of their "oomiaks" or family canoes, to convey the party to Point Barrow, with which, from a chart drawn by one of the most intelligent of the women, it appeared that these people were acquainted. The request was

immediately complied with ; four oars were fitted with lashings to this strange craft, and the ladies declared that our party were true Esquimaux and not "Kabloonan." Before starting the hunters arrived, and were likewise gratified with tobacco, awls, buttons, and other trifles. "Dease's Inlet" is five miles broad at this place, yet so low is the land that the one shore is just visible from the other in the clearest weather. It now again blew strongly from the north-east, bringing back the cold dense fog, but the traverse was effected by aid of the compass. The waves ran high, and the skin boat surmounted them with a buoyancy which far surpassed that of our boasted north canoes. The party encamped on the west side of the inlet. The banks there were of frozen mud ten or twelve feet high; the country within was perfectly flat, abounded in small lakes, and produced a very short grass, but nowhere had the thaw penetrated more than two inches beneath the surface, while under water along the shore the bottom was still impenetrably frozen. Not a log of wood was to be found in this land of desolation, but our party followed the example of the natives, and made their fire of the roots of the dwarf-willow in a little chimney of turf. Next morning (August 3rd) the fog cleared for a while, but it was still bitterly cold, and the swell beat high on the outside of a heavy line of ice which lay packed upon the shore. The latter, after extending five miles to the northward, turned off to the north-west, beyond which the latitude  $71^{\circ} 13'$  was observed. From this point the coast trended more westerly for ten miles, until the party came to what appeared a large bay, where they stopped for two or three hours to await the dispersion of the fog, not knowing which way to steer. In the evening their wish was gratified, and from that time the weather became comparatively fine. The bay was now ascertained to be only four miles in width: the depth half way across was one fathom and a half on a bottom of sand; that of Dease's Inlet was afterwards found to be two fathoms, muddy bottom, being the greatest depth between Return Reef and Point Barrow, except at ten miles south-east from Cape Halkett, where three fathoms on sand were sounded on our return. After crossing "Mackenzie's Bay" the coast again trended for eight or nine miles to the W.N.W. A compact body of ice extended all along and beyond the reach of vision to seaward; but the party carried their light vessel within that formidable barrier and made their way through the narrow channels close to the shore. At midnight they passed the mouth of a fine deep river, a quarter of a mile wide, to which Mr. Simpson gave the name of "The Belle Vue," and in less than an hour afterwards the rising sun gratified him with the view of Point Barrow stretching out to the N.N.W.

They soon crossed Elson Bay, (which in the perfect calm had acquired a coating of young ice,) but had no small difficulty in making their way through a broad and heavy pack that rested upon the shore. On reaching it, and seeing the ocean extending away to the southward on the opposite side of the Point, they hoisted their flag, and with three cheers took possession of their discoveries in his Majesty's name.

Point Barrow is a long low spit, composed of gravel and coarse sand; which the pressure of the ice has forced up into numerous mounds, that, viewed from a distance, assume the appearance of huge boulder rocks. At the spot where the party landed it is only a quarter of a mile across, but is broader towards its termination. The first object that presented itself on looking round the landing-place was an immense cemetery. The bodies lay exposed in the most horrible and disgusting manner, and many of them appeared so fresh that some of the men became alarmed that the cholera or some other dreadful disease was raging among the natives. Two considerable camps of the latter stood at no great distance on the Point, but none of the inmates ventured to approach till our party first visited them, and with the customary expressions of friendship dissipated their apprehensions. A brisk traffic then commenced, after which the women formed a circle and danced to a variety of airs, some of which were pleasing to the ear. The whole conduct of these people was friendly in the extreme; they seemed to be well acquainted with the character if not the persons of white men, were passionately fond of tobacco, and when any of the younger people were too forward, the seniors restrained them, using the French phrase "*c'est assez*," which, like "*tawāccah*," they must have learned from the Russian traders. They designate the latter "*Noonatagmun*," and a respectable looking old man readily took charge of a letter addressed by Mr. Simpson to them or to any other whites on the western coast, containing a brief notice of the proceedings of the expedition. To the northward enormous icebergs covered the ocean, but on the western side there was a fine open channel, which the Esquimaux assured the party extended all along to the southward; and so inviting was the prospect in that direction that, had such been his object, Mr. Simpson would not have hesitated a moment to prosecute the voyage to Cook's Inlet in his skin canoe. The natives informed him that whales were numerous to the northward of the Point, and seals were everywhere sporting among the ice. These Esquimaux were well clothed in seal and reindeer skins; the men all used mouth ornaments, and the "*tonsure*" on the crown of the head was universal among both men and boys; the women had their chins tattooed, but did not wear the lofty top-knots of

hair which are fashionable to the eastward. They were very inquisitive about the names of our party, and equally communicative of their own. A number of their words were taken down, some of which are different from the corresponding terms given by Sir Edward Parry, but the greater part are either the same or dissimilar only in their terminations. They lay their dead on the ground, with their heads all turned to the north. There was nothing else either in their manners or habits remarked as differing from the well-known characteristics of the tribe, except an ingenious and novel contrivance for capturing wild fowl. It consists of six small perforated ivory balls attached separately to cords of sinew three feet long, the ends of which being tied together, an expanding sling is thus formed, which, dexterously thrown up at the birds as they fly past, entangles and brings them to the ground.

Mr. Simpson could not learn that there had been any unusual mortality among this part of the tribe, and is of opinion that the concourse of natives who frequent Point Barrow at different periods of the year, coupled with the coldness of the climate, sufficiently account for the numerous remains already noticed. It was high water between one and two o'clock A.M. and P.M.; the rise of the tide was fourteen inches; and the flood came from the westward. Observations were obtained which determined the position of the landing-place to be in lat.  $71^{\circ} 23\frac{1}{2}'$  N., long.  $156^{\circ} 20'$  W., agreeing closely with the observations of Mr. Elson. Then, bidding adieu to their good-humoured and admiring entertainers, the party set out on their return. They were arrested that evening by the ice, but next morning (August 5) it opened and allowed them to proceed. At a late hour they reached the camp of the Esquimaux in Dease's Inlet, and, after liberally recompensing them for the loan of their canoe, directed some of the men to follow to Boat Extreme, where it would be left for them. Then continuing their route all night, at five A.M. on the 6th the party rejoined the main body of the expedition.

We commenced our return the same afternoon, and, being favoured by a light wind and an almost open sea, we sailed all night, and next day (Aug. 7) at noon reached Cape Halkett. We then steered across Harrison's Bay: the wind increasing to a gale we shipped much water, but persevering, under treble-reefed sails, at three P.M. of the 8th we landed safely at "Fawn River," within view of the point where our survey commenced. The position of this encampment was ascertained by good observations to be in lat.  $70^{\circ} 25'$  N., long.  $148^{\circ} 25'$  W. The gale having moderated we re-embarked the following afternoon, and, running without intermission before a fresh breeze, we

reached Demarcation Point to breakfast on the 11th. Several showers of snow fell during this run, and it was piercingly cold. The Romanzoff and British mountains had assumed the early livery of another winter. The ice in Camden Bay was still very heavy, but it protected us from the dangerous swell to which we became exposed after passing Barter Island. Soon after leaving Demarcation Point the ice became so closely wedged that we could no longer pursue our way through it. The following day (August 12) it opened a little, and the weather becoming fine we put out and advanced for a few hours, when the mountainous swell and heavy ice obliged us to seek the shore, which we reached with some difficulty between Backhouse River and Mount Conybeare. There we were detained until the 15th. The icebergs which begirt the coast were of great size, and of every imaginable shape, but from the summit of a hill, six miles in-land, we had an unbounded prospect of the blue ocean stretching to the north. The pasture in the deep valleys among the mountains was luxuriant; herds of reindeer were browsing there, and we procured some venison. In the night of the 14th the stars and aurora borealis were first visible. The following morning we resumed our route, and the weather continuing nearly calm we reached the western mouth of the Mackenzie on the 17th, and there encamped. The first Eskimaux seen during our return from Boat Extreme were at Beaufort Bay, but from thence to the vicinity of the Mackenzie we were continually falling in with small parties, many of whom we had seen on the outward voyage. We maintained a friendly intercourse with them all, and they were very anxious to know whether we were soon to visit them again. The habitations on Tent Island were abandoned in consequence, we understood, of an alarm that the Loucheux meditated a descent to revenge the murder of their friends.

We have but few general remarks to add to the foregoing narrative. The tides all along the coast were semi-diurnal; the flood coming from the westward. The rise, however, was strongly affected by the winds and ice; and our opportunities of observing were but few. At Boat Extreme the average rise was fifteen inches; high water from one and to two o'clock, A.M. and P.M. The rise generally decreased to the eastward, and at Point Kay it was only eight or nine inches. That the main sea is clear and navigable by ships during the summer months the long rolling swell we encountered on our return, and the view obtained from the mountains, furnish tolerable proof. We likewise saw some whales on our return. The prevalence of east and north-east winds during the early part of the summer is a remarkable fact. We were indeed favoured by a westerly wind for five days on our

return, but this was almost the only exception. At a more advanced period of the season, however, the winds blew more from the west and north-west. It is now certain that from Kotzebue's Sound to Cape Parry there is not a harbour into which a ship can safely enter, but it must be a very unpropitious season that would not admit of achieving that portion of the Arctic navigation; and another year ought certainly to suffice for the remainder, whether the voyage were commenced from Barrow's or from Behring's Strait. On this subject, however, we shall be better able to offer an opinion if successful in our next summer's operations.

The natural history of the coast from Return Reef to Point Barrow is meagre in the extreme. In the botanical kingdom scarcely a flower or moss was obtained in addition to the collection made on other parts of the coast. In zoology, reindeer, arctic foxes, one or two limmings, seals, white owls, snow buntings, grouse (*Lagopus salicite et rupestres*), and various well-known species of water-fowl, were the only objects met with; while in the mineralogical department there was not a rock *in situ* or boulder-stone found along an extent of more than two hundred miles of coast. The variation of the compass was found to have increased from one to three degrees at the corresponding points where observations had been made by Sir John Franklin. At Boat Extreme, on the other hand, it was only twenty-one minutes greater than that stated by Mr. Elson at Point Barrow, where, by continuing the proportion, the quantities would coincide. The moon was never once visible during the whole outward and homeward voyage, till our return to the western mouth of Mackenzie, where a set of distances was obtained, and the longitudes of the other points reduced back from thence by means of a very valuable watch generously lent to the expedition by Chief Factor Smith.

The map of our discoveries will be prepared and transmitted to your Honours in the spring.

Our ascent of the Mackenzie has not been characterised by any circumstance of particular interest. The weather continued calm and beautiful; and the journey was performed entirely by towing, in which manner we advanced at the rate of from thirty to forty miles a-day. The river has fallen very low, and the fisheries have, in consequence, been unproductive, causing a scarcity of provisions both at Fort Good Hope and among the natives. We saw a good many of the Loucheux, but the Hare Indians were all dispersed in the interior, searching for subsistence. From the coast up to Point Separation moose-deer were numerous—being quite undisturbed, but from our first falling in with the

Loucheux no vestiges of either moose or reindeer have been seen. We reached this place yesterday with half of our summer's stock of provisions still forthcoming, and are now awaiting with impatience the arrival of our outfit and despatches.

Some Indians from Great Bear Lake have brought us intelligence of the party sent to establish our winter-quarters. They were stopped in Bear Lake river by ice during the whole month of July, lost one of their canoes, and it was not till about the 6th ultimo that they passed Fort Franklin, after which they had the prospect of an unimpeded passage across the lake. The continued easterly winds were the cause of this vexatious detention, during which the Dogribs kindly supported our people with the produce of their nets.

*Sept. 8.*—We have this morning received Governor Simpson's letter, dated London, 11th November last, and have to offer our lively acknowledgments to your Honours for the interest you have been pleased to express in the success of the expedition, and in the welfare of ourselves and party.

We have duly received the journals of Captain Back's last expedition, and are glad to find that his new undertaking is in no way to interfere with our original instructions.

Your Honours may rest assured that our efforts in the cause of discovery and science next summer, to the eastward of the Coppermine river, will not be less zealous than they have this season been in another field, and we are sanguine in the hope that they will be crowned with equal success.

Our supplies for next season have come to hand. They were delivered in very indifferent order at Portage la Loche, and there was a considerable deficiency in the weights of the pemmican; but with the quantity saved of this year's stock there will be provision enough for next summer's operations, and we have no further demands to make upon the Dépôt for goods.

We send two men express to Great Slave Lake with this despatch, and to meet the spring packet, the non-arrival of which causes us some anxiety; and to-morrow we take our departure for winter-quarters.

We are, &c.

PETER W. DEASE.  
THOMAS SIMPSON.

*The Governor, Deputy Governor,  
and Committee of the  
Honourable the Hudson's Bay Company, London.*

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